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372 374 The vital importance of fire as such is increased still more by its many uses. It is an unsurpassed protection chiefly against cold and dampness. What it means to these people who, day after day, almost stark naked, are exposed to rain and snow, fog and wind, salt water, and wet earth can be adequately appreciated only by someone who has personally experienced the comfort of the fire under those conditions. The fire, always available in the hut and in the canoe, thoroughly warms the parts of the body that are uncomfortable. In a few minutes the feeling of cold vanishes and the stiffness of the limbs disappears, delicate wisps of steam rise from the surface of the body which has been drenched with rain, and anyone lingering for a while at the fire is restored to life. A person who wishes to have its effect for a longer time makes a small fire beside his pallet or the place where he sits. He brings his arms or legs quite close to it or bends his head and the upper part of his body over it. Everyone who must stay too far away from the fire in the middle part of the hut provides for himself in this manner.

752 His inseparable association with fire also explains why there is scarcely a Yamana to be met who does not have scars from burns (61). Small children often injure themselves badly.

61. After direct observation Hyades (f) 159 even stated: "There is not a Fuegian who does not show mottling on his body, especially on his legs, due to the effect on the skin of prolonged stays in the immediate vicinity of the fire" /translated from French/.
Bove writes (Mbl.XVII, 235; 1883): "Professor Spegazzini examined more than fifty Fuegians, and did not find one amongst them free from the mark of serious burns" /cited in English/.

I saw coarse scar tissue, indicating a serious injury, on the entire right leg of a grown girl, the daughter of Felipe (82).

62. In more recent times, on July 18, 1902, J. Williams (Mbl.XXXVI, 277; 1902) reported the death "of a woman from burns.

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352 The whole of the lower part of her body was badly burnt, in some places the bones were exposed" /cited in English/.

56 It is not surprising that the entire surface of the body of these Indians and also every larger object they use exudes a penetrating odor of smoke. Moreover, the uncovered parts of their body become deeply tanned. I observed that my own face and hands became colored after only a few days of frequent visits to the Indian huts. This change disappeared only after prominent, thorough scrubbing with soap and warm water for a few weeks at home.

373 /367/ Our Indians do not use special material for illumination. The weak light given off by the fire suffices. They do not work at night anyway. If a light is necessary to look for something or to examine something, they strip off a handful of the bark with which their hut is covered and place it on the fire which immediately flames up brightly. In order to light a path in the dark, they wave a dry, smoldering piece of bark back and forth until it flares up. Signal fires serve to convey messages over a long distance and have special meaning.

372 The Indian roasts and fries his food at the fire and also melts his whale blubber there. He never eats animal food raw. Finally, he needs the fire for some of his handiwork. With fire, he makes rushes flexible for the braiding of baskets and ropes; he bends the large pieces of bark for his canoe; he dries raw materials and implements before or during their utilization; he fells hollow tree trunks by burning them out, and so forth (63).

63. For the manifold uses of fire by these Indians, see Hyades (q):345. In Volume I, page 287, I have described how the Selk'nam make use of it.

The Yamana could probably do without their clothing and their miserable hut on the frosty Cape Horn archipelago, but they could never give up their open fire in the hut and in the canoe (64).

64. "As life is impossible here without fire, the

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spread over it; the latter is a reliable remedy for growths resembling carbuncles. Pustules are daubed and rubbed gently with saliva. Fresh small twigs and leaves of Macrocystis are put on swellings; they develop a slimy substance which is allowed to take effect. Fresh barberry shavings are put on an aching tooth. Loose teeth are broken and pulled out with the fingers. Hyades (p):339 says something that I cannot confirm from my own observations: "Insanity, if it exists, is very rare. The mad are treated with cold baths" /translated from French/. A broken arm is treated by first placing thin sticks and a few pieces of leather around it; then this is bound with stout strips of leather. The bandage is kept in place until the pain and swelling have subsided. These are the procedures that the Fuegians know for helping themselves in case of accidents and physical ailments.

7. The Language

It is well known that the language of the Yamana has often been described in general accounts and there is an astonishing amount of material. Many a writer has let himself be carried away, in repeated references to an unusually rich vocabulary. Bridges himself started this trend. I tried to explain in (gg):162 why he said that his dictionary contained 32,430 words. I have also emphatically pointed out that the Yamana language does not have that number of words and that a rich vocabulary by no means indicates a high level of development for this language. "Quite the contrary," I (hh):183 said earlier, "one will recognize the considerable poverty of a language from the fact that it requires many words." Long before, Garbe:336 pointed to this decisive condition. No one is to be blamed for the fact that a critical study of Yamana grammar as a whole has not yet been carried out -- F. Hestermann worked on a number of parts -- /1460/ for texts are lacking. The comprehensive dictionary of the Reverend T. Bridges was only published in 1933 by Hestermann and Gusinde, and the well-known translations of the New Testament that Bridges made six decades ago are not suitable for this purpose. I, too, should not be reproached and told that I failed to collect original texts. To enumerate myself, I may point out that on my journeys I was